

REMARKS

The Office Action rejected the claims under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103. Applicant cancelled claim 8; amended claims 1, 3, 7 and 13; and added new claims 21-24. Claims 1-7 and 9-24 remain. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections.

A Petition for a one (1) month extension of time and an Information Disclosure Statement accompany this Amendment as separate papers.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The Office Action rejected Claims 1-12 as being unpatentable over by UK Patent Application GB 2 304 158 A to inventor Hoffelner (hereafter “Hoffelner”). With respect to claims 1-6, independent claim 1 now recites, *inter alia*, that the bristle arrangement includes “bristles” and a “weld joint.” Hoffelner fails to disclose or to suggest such a feature. Hoffelner describes a bristle bundle (B) curled around an annular core (7) and held by a clamping tube (8). None of the remaining cited references provide a motivation for such a modification.

With respect to claims 7-12, independent claim 7 now recites, *inter alia*, that the plates have a “channel” that extends “to an end of at least one of said plates.” Hoffelner fails to disclose or to suggest such a feature. None of the remaining cited references provide a motivation for such a modification. In light of the foregoing, Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The Office Action rejected Claims 13-20 as being unpatentable over Hoffelner. With respect to claims 13 and 14, these claims depend from independent claim 7. As discussed above, independent claim 7 now recites an invention that is patentable over the cited references.

With respect to claims 15-20, independent claim recites a step of “selectively locating” the bristle arrangement. Hoffelner fails to disclose or to suggest such a step. Specifically, Hoffelner lacks any discussion or suggestion that during assembly an active choice (*i.e.* “selectively”) is made regarding the position of the bristle bundle (B) when placed between the flanges (4,5). None of the remaining cited references provide a motivation for such a modification. Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection.

Other Claim Amendments

Applicant made several changes to the claims that were neither made for purposes of patentability nor made to narrow the claims. Specifically, Applicant modified dependent claim 3 to conform to the changes made to independent claim 1, and modified dependent claim 13 to properly refer to the brush seal “segment” described in independent claim 7. None of these changes introduce new matter.

Newly Added Claims

Applicant added new claims 21-24. The newly added claims do not introduce new matter. Support for the newly added claims appears in the disclosure as originally filed. For example, claim 21 finds support in paragraph 29; claims 22 and 23 find support in Figure 4d; and claim 24

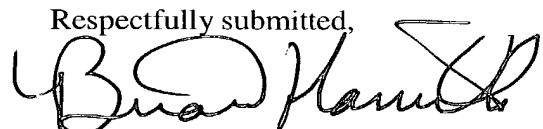
finds support in paragraph 26. The newly added claims define inventions that are patentable over the cited references.

Conclusion

In light of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the claims are now in condition for allowance. Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the restriction requirement and rejection. Applicant solicits the allowance of Claims 1-7 and 9-24 at an early date.

Applicant authorizes the Commissioner to charge the \$72 fee ($4 \times \$18 = \72) due under 37 CFR 1.16(c) for the presentation of four (4) claims in excess of twenty (20), and any fee due under 37 CFR 1.16 or 17, or to credit any overpayments, during prosecution of this Application, to **Deposit Account Number 21-0279**.

Respectfully submitted,



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